

**Amendments to the Claims:**

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Currently Amended) A printing apparatus comprising:  
a printing unit configured to print an image onto a continuous paper; and  
a continuous paper transporting mechanism configured to transport the continuous paper,

wherein the continuous paper transporting mechanism comprises:  
a frictionally transporting section configured to frictionally transport the continuous paper in a first direction, the frictionally transporting section including a back feeding unit configured to feed back the continuous paper in a second opposite direction by a predetermined amount after completion of printing;  
a paper braking section provided on an upstream side of the frictionally transporting section and configured to put brake on the transportation of the continuous paper;  
a paper-position restricting section having a pair of rollers arranged between the frictionally transporting section and the paper braking section obliquely at a predetermined angle  $\theta$  with respect to a paper transporting direction; and  
a buffer unit provided between the paper-position restricting section and the frictionally transporting section and configured to come into contact with a surface of the continuous paper when the continuous paper is feeding back, and to separate from the surface of the continuous paper when the continuous paper is feeding forward, and  
wherein the printing unit is disposed on a downstream side of the frictionally transporting section.

2. (Previously Presented) The printing apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein the buffer unit comprises a pushing-out member configured to push out a surface of the continuous paper by coming into contact with the surface, and

wherein the apparatus further comprises a pushing-out-amount controlling unit configured to control an amount of push out by the pushing-out member in correspondence with an amount of the feeding back by the frictionally transporting section.

3. (Original) The printing apparatus as claimed in claim 2, wherein the pushing-out member comprises at least one of a roller and a guide member, and is located at a position spaced apart from the continuous paper during printing.

4. (Original) The printing apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein the frictionally transporting section comprises a pair of drive rollers by which the continuous paper is frictionally transported therebetween.

5. (Currently Amended) A continuous paper transporting mechanism comprising:

a frictionally transporting section configured to frictionally transport the continuous paper in a first direction, the frictionally transporting section including a back feeding unit configured to feed back the continuous paper in a second opposite direction by a predetermined amount after completion of printing;

a paper braking section provided on an upstream side of the frictionally transporting section and configured to put brake on the transportation of the continuous paper;

a paper-position restricting section having a pair of rollers arranged between the frictionally transporting section and the paper braking section obliquely at a predetermined angle  $\theta$  with respect to a paper transporting direction; and

a buffer unit provided between the paper-position restricting section and the frictionally transporting section and configured to come into contact with a surface of the

continuous paper when the continuous paper is feeding back, and to separate from the surface of the continuous paper when the continuous paper is feeding forward.

6. (Original) The continuous paper transporting mechanism as claimed in claim 5, wherein the frictionally transporting section comprises a pair of drive rollers by which the continuous paper is frictionally transported therebetween.

7. (Previously Presented) The printing apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein the buffer unit starts driving before the frictionally transporting section starts feeding back the continuous paper, and the buffer unit stops driving after the frictionally transporting section stops feeding back the continuous paper.

8. (Previously Presented) The printing apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein the buffer unit simultaneously starts driving when the frictionally transporting section starts to transport the continuous paper at the time of printing, and the buffer unit is moved away from the surface of the continuous paper correspondingly as an amount of buffer of the continuous paper is decreased.

9. (Previously Presented) The continuous paper transporting mechanism as claimed in claim 5,

wherein the buffer unit starts driving before the frictionally transporting section starts feeding back the continuous paper, and the buffer unit stops driving after the frictionally transporting section stops feeding back the continuous paper.

10. (Previously Presented) The continuous paper transporting mechanism as claimed in claim 5,

wherein the buffer unit simultaneously starts driving when the frictionally transporting section starts to transport the continuous paper at the time of printing, and the buffer unit is moved away from the surface of the continuous paper correspondingly as an amount of buffer of the continuous paper is decreased.

11. (Currently Amended) A printing apparatus comprising:

a printing unit configured to print an image onto a continuous paper; and

a continuous paper transporting mechanism configured to transport the continuous paper,

wherein the continuous paper transporting mechanism comprises:

a frictionally transporting section configured to frictionally transport the continuous paper in a first direction, the frictionally transporting section including a back feeding unit configured to feed back the continuous paper in a second opposite direction by a pre-determined amount after completion of printing;

a buffer unit provided between the paper-position restricting section and the frictionally transporting section and configured to come into contact with a surface of the continuous paper when the continuous paper is feeding back, and to separate from the surface of the continuous paper when the continuous paper is feeding forward, and

wherein the printing unit is disposed on a downstream side of the frictionally transporting section.